



Family Handbook

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Welcome to Cloverdale Child Care Centre

Please ensure that you read the following information:

We thank you for taking the time to look around our centre. We are very proud of what we offer at Cloverdale Child Care Centre and hope you enjoy your time with us.

This handbook is a general resource for all families who use our Service. A full copy of the policies relating to your child's care can be requested from the front office.

We look forward to a long and rewarding partnership with you and your family.

Hours of opening

The Centre is open Monday to Friday 6:30am until 6:30pm 52 weeks of the year (excluding all public holidays)

Service Closing Time and Late Fees

Please be aware the Program closes at 6:30pm. A late fee is incurred for children collected after 6:30pm. The fee is \$15 per child for every 15 minutes or part thereof and will be added to your next account. The late fee is strictly adhered to, as two staff members are required to remain at the program until all children are collected. If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within an hour of the Service closing, then we will contact Department of Education and Communities and the Police to take responsibility of your child.

Fees

We actively encourage families to seek Child Care Benefit (CCB) where possible. CCB is based on the number of children in care and the combined gross family income, which is assessed by the Family Assistance Office.

Fees are to be kept two weeks in advance at all times. It is essential that two weeks notice in writing must be given when a child is to be withdrawn from care. Fees are payable for public holidays, sick days or whenever the child is absent.

Families experiencing financial difficulties should contact the Director to discuss the situation. All matters will be handled with the strictest confidence.

Failure to settle the account by the date requested on the Final Notice will result in notice that care has been withdrawn immediately.

Confidentiality

We are committed to protecting your privacy. We support and are bound by privacy laws and strict confidentiality is maintained at all times. In order to plan programs with you we need to collect information from you. This information helps us to assess and plan programs in partnership with you. We do not disclose personal information about you or your child to other people or organisations without your consent, unless we are required to do so by law. We do not ask for personal information about you or your child from other professionals or organisations without your consent. You can look at the information in your child's file at any time, or request a copy of information in the file.

Service Policies and Procedures

Staff members are expected to follow the Service's policies and procedures and to ensure that all stakeholders act in accordance with them. Educators cannot make exceptions for individuals unless the Nominated Supervisor or Management do so on account of serious and unusual circumstances. We hope that you will feel comfortable enough with staff and management to approach us with comments and questions about our service, including complaints. Your involvement helps us to improve our service and may lead us to change our policies and procedures. Copies of all policies are available in each classroom or from the office.

Enrolment Information

It is essential that we have up-to-date information in case of an emergency. It is important that you notify the office staff and your child's Educator of any changes to enrolment information including:

- Address
- Health
- Telephone/mobile numbers
- Contact details
- Family changes
- Emergency contact information details etc.

Ask the educator at any time if you would like to check any details on the enrolment form. It is essential that we have copies of your child's birth certificate and immunization status. We are also required to have certified copies of any court orders relating to the child.

Goals for your child at our Service

“We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being.”

Maria Montessori

The aim of each Educator in our Service is not to fill the child with facts and provide basic, one dimensional activities but rather to act as a vehicle providing access to materials and information that scaffolds on their ideas and create experiences that cultivate their own natural desire to learn, to give them lifelong tools to question, seek and succeed.

Along with you, we will create a list of goals for your child that we will *program to* and *observe on*. The outcomes will be *reflected on, extended and recorded*, all in consultation with you. The broader goals we have for each child are based on the outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework and include:

- Mutual respect and empathy
- Concern and responsibility for self and others
- A sense of self worth
- Social awareness
- Importance of sustainability
- Self-discipline
- Habits of initiative and persistence
- Creative intelligence and imagination
- Self-confidence as an independent learner
- A love of learning

We strongly encourage communication between the Service and home to ensure continuity in what we are delivering to your child and acknowledge that the role of the Educator is to work in partnership with families; *children's first and most influential educators*.

Programming

Through our curriculum, The Early Years Learning Framework, we have a focus of Belonging, which is integral to a child's sense of self. It acknowledges belonging to a family, community and culture. It is the foundation of relationships and acceptance. Along with Belonging we have Being. Being is allowing the children to be in the present - to concentrate on the here and now. It's allowing them time to investigate, attach to people, environments and experiences. They are able to meet challenges with confidence that they have the time and support to work through and overcome any obstacles in their own time. Being sees the Educators develop and support an environment that is child focused, *not for the convenience of routine or the Educators*. Lastly, we have Becoming. Becoming acknowledges change and there is no time in one's life that has more rapid change than in the years of early childhood. Becoming recognises the skills that are necessary to thrive through change and how experiences and circumstances create skills, expectations, understandings and relationships. It allows flexibility for a child to learn and grow. On this foundation we observe each child for outcomes that we can support in the program. The 5 outcomes are:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners

- Children are effective communicators.

Each day your child is observed with relevant information documented. Along with the goals that are developed for each individual child, the observation is reflected on and followed up with extended experiences to support the child in expanding their knowledge, concepts and skills related to their interest. Families are given the opportunity to also reflect on the observations and add their input which Educators will then incorporate into the program.

We know that children learn effectively through play and this is supported by Educators who are diligent in their responsiveness to each child. Applying strong intentional teaching practices will provide the children with an authentic and meaningful learning environment which challenges, supports and nurtures a child's development.

Portfolios

Every child will have a personal, confidential portfolio comprising of;

- Child profile sheet
- Goals from families and Educators
- Observations
- Objectives for further development
- Work samples
- Checklists
- Other relevant data

This portfolio is to be maintained and used as a direct tool for evaluation and future planning within the Service's program. This makes the program reflect the value of individuality and is not be used as a means of comparison between peers or stereotypes. You will be given your child's portfolio at the end of the school year or as they finish at the Service. The portfolio will be used in parent/Educator meetings throughout the year and is always available for you to review at your convenience.

Our Educational and Care Philosophy:

At Cloverdale Child Care Centre we strive to provide high quality care and education which is inclusive of all children - this being inclusive of their age, gender, ethnicity or abilities. We pride ourselves on and understand the importance of building strong relationships with our families and how this plays a vital part in promoting children's learning and development.

We build warm, respectful relationships with our children which supports them to feel a sense of belonging in our Centre and their classroom. We know that once these meaning relationships are established with children they feel comfortable being who they are they are, discovering new things about themselves and expressing themselves in an exciting, stimulating environment. We are continuously strategising ways to implement a learning program that supports all children in becoming competent, confident young learners who have a sense of pride within themselves.

The Reggio Emilia Philosophy and The Early Year Learning Framework are used to guide our teaching practice when promoting the development of children's holistic well-being, this includes the child's; emotional, social, intellectual, physical and spiritual dimensions of well-being. We view the child's environment, indoor and outdoor areas, as the 'third teacher.' This meaning, the environment is set up to; capture children's interest, inspire children to express themselves creatively through a variety of mediums, and allow children time to explore their environment. We strive to know our children well so we can; extend of their interests and strengths, provide appropriate support through challenges, celebrate their achievements and care for them the way they need. We aim for children to feel as though our Centre is their home away from home.

Cloverdale Child Care Centre will seek to carry out the following objectives;

- Provide an emergent curriculum built on children's interests in a calm and caring environment.
- Provide a curriculum and environment that draws from the very best early childhood teaching theories and practices.
- Provide a meaningful educational program based on the Early Years Learning Framework taking into account the different abilities and strengths of the children.
- Reflective planning that allows the opportunity for both intentional teaching and spontaneous play.
- Value individuality and the diverse community we serve.
- Respect differences, value cultural diversity and share traditions with respect and appreciation.
- Commit to professional teamwork where staff value and respect one another and the contribution they make to ensure a cohesive team.
- Educators work in a partnership with parents in optimising the learning of each child.
- Commit to ongoing professional development.
- Support the principles of social justice.

How can you be involved?

The Service has an *Open Door Policy* and actively seeks and encourages families to be as involved in the Service as they wish. This can range from evaluating and adding input to your child's program and observations, volunteering within the Service and sharing skills & experiences that the children and the program will benefit from.

You can be involved in the Service's Family Committee. Your involvement can be as formal or active as you like as time permits. We respect that time is limited for most families and we ask that you inform us as to your preferred way of communication. We can arrange meetings with your child's Educator at a time that suits you throughout the year and offer email, SMS, Facebook, Newsletters, Day Book Journals and pride ourselves on strong verbal communication on a daily basis. We seek input from families on all aspects of the Service but in particular, your child's goals, observations and program.

If, for any reason you question or do not understand any aspect of the Service or your child's experience we have a Grievance Policy that supports all stakeholders in our community and like all policies, is available for families to consult and implement at any time. Copies of our policies are available in the office. You are welcome to take a copy home and review at your leisure.

How to prepare your child for our environment

Orientation is an important start for your child and family to connect to our service. We encourage each child to attend the Service in the company of a family member three (3) times before they start the day with us. This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program, the lay out of the room, where to find things, provide Educators with additional information about your child and how we can best support their transition and settling period.

If your child is reluctant to attend, please discuss this with their assigned Educator so that they can develop strategies with you to support the transition from home to the Service. You are welcome to take photos of your child in our environment to show and discuss at home. Some children like to take a book from our library to read at home and return on the next visit.

'Preschool Day Hooray' By Linda Leopold Strauss, 'Maisy goes to Preschool' by Lucy Cousins, 'What to expect at Preschool' by Heidi Murkoff and 'I love you all day long' by Francesca Rusackas are some great books to read to your child leading up to their first day.

Communication between home and the service must be open and happen often to best support your child during this time. There may be tears and extra tight hugs when saying goodbye for the first few weeks but there are always cuddles, reassurance and genuine care from Educators for both the children and their families. Sometimes this experience is upsetting more so for the family, not the child. We understand this and offer support through phone calls and emails during the day, photos and open communication.

Saying goodbye

Ideally, your child will be settled at an activity before you leave, however some children find it hard to settle until their parents have gone. What works best is a set routine so try to establish the day routine from the orientation process. Being well organised and avoiding a rush usually results in a calm start to the day.

Most children will want to have a look around first to see who else has arrived and to look at what activities are available. Please tell your child when you are leaving as they may become upset if they haven't had the opportunity to say goodbye. This gains trust from the child, not only in you but in the Educator who is reassuring your child about their day and when you will return. Rest assured that we will ring you if your child is distressed.

What to bring to the Service

Bag or Backpack

For independence, we work towards all children being able to recognise and open their own bag. Let them be involved in selecting the bag and taking ownership of it. Please ensure it is large enough to hold all their belongings.

Clothing

It is helpful to your child if they are dressed in non- restrictive, serviceable, easy to wash clothes so that they feel free to join in all the activities and to develop independence. Shoes also, need to allow children freedom to run, climb, hop & jump as well as being easy for the child to take off and put on by him/her. Unsuitable shoes are thongs and gumboots and we prefer that these are NOT worn to the Service. Lace up joggers or sandals are appropriate. Also, please consider clothing that enables the child to move around easily and allows children to be independent in dressing. Clothing such as long dresses, overalls, braces, belts and stiff buttons can prove a problem for children who need to go to the toilet. We require all t-shirts to have sleeves, no mid-drift tops and hats that are broad brimmed are essential for effective sun safety.

Spare clothes: Every now and then accidents occur and it may be necessary for your child to get changed into a fresh set. Please include a complete change of clothes every day which can stay in your child's bag...just in case!

Sunhat: A sun protective hat (legionnaire or broad brimmed) must be worn every day when playing outside for protection against the sun. Please make ensure you provide your child with a hat to be left at the service.

Prepared and named bottles (if appropriate)

Nappies for the day (if appropriate)

One piece of fruit per day – placed in the fruit bowl on the kitchen bench.

Toys

The Service has an abundance of toys and we ask that children do not bring in toys from home. This eliminates toys getting lost, broken, disappointment for other children and responsibility on Educators to track numerous toys throughout the day.

Birthdays

You are welcome to bring in a birthday cake for your child so that they will be able to share with their friends. Cup Cakes are recommended. Please ensure that you advise us if your child has any allergies or you would prefer they do not eat the cake. If this is the case we may ask you to bring in something special for your child so that they feel part of the celebration. We encourage that the cakes are store bought so the Service can guarantee the suitability of the ingredients

Family Photo

We have in all rooms a Family Wall. This is a strong and valuable tool in our environment for your child to connect to, feel that they and their family are valued and that their family is as much a part of the Service, even if they are not always there. If you would like to bring in a photo, or a couple of photos that represent your family, we would love to add it to our wall.

I Love You albums are sent home with your enrolment packs to place any photos you feel with help your child settle. You may wish to add photos of parents, siblings, grandparents, pets or toys.

Sun Smart

Children and Educators will wear hats and appropriate clothing when outside. Staff will encourage children, including by way of modelling behaviour, to avoid excessive exposure to the sun and to wear suitable sunscreen (at least SPF 15+), which is reapplied according to the manufacturers recommendations. We ask that children come to the Service with sunscreen already applied so they are able to participate in outdoor play immediately and not have to wait the 20 minutes after application.

When should I not send my child to the Service?

Child Care is a busy and demanding day for the bodies and minds of our children. Our Service is not equipped to care for sick children; however we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care. To try and prevent the spread of disease, please monitor your child's health and watch for:

- A runny, green nose
- High temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic

Please do not bring your child to the Service if they display any of the above symptoms. If a child becomes ill whilst at the Service the child's parents or person responsible for the child will be contacted to organise collection of the child. If the child is unable to be collected, that child will be kept away from other children and given the opportunity to rest or play with a quiet washable activity whilst remaining within adult supervision.

When the child is collected, the family will have the following information made available to them to present to their doctor: symptoms, date of onset, general behaviour of the child leading up to the illness and any action taken.

Your child should not attend the Service if they have had Panadol or Neurofen within 24 hours. It is extremely important that staff members are aware if a child has had either medication so we do not

re-administer and potentially overdose. The other consideration is that medication of any type should not be added to a child's bottle. Children who are on antibiotics are to be kept away from the Service for the first 24 hours to allow the child to rest and the risk of spreading the infection to decrease.

A Doctors certificate may be required prior to returning to the Service. If your child has been away due to illness, please check with the Service as to whether or not you will need a certificate before your child returns.

Infectious Diseases

The following information has been supplied by the National Health and Medical Research Council re: exclusion from the Service of a child suffering with the following diseases/ailments. Please inform staff if your child has any of the following so that we can let families know if something is going around and avoid an epidemic. (Confidentiality maintained of course).

Condition	Exclusion
Hand, foot and mouth Disease	Until all blisters have dried.
Hib	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.
Herpes – cold sores	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible.
Influenza and flu-like Illnesses	Exclude until well.
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash.
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well.
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).
Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Readmit after receiving medical certificate of recovery.
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 4 days after the onset of rash.
Salmonella, Shigella	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.
Streptococcal infection (including Scarlet Fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.
Tuberculosis	Exclude until a medical certificate from an appropriate health authority is received.
Whooping Cough	Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude if diarrhoea present.

If your child is unimmunised according to our records, then they will be excluded until the threat has passed.

NHMRC Recommended Immunisation Schedule (0-5yrs) from January 1, 2006

Age	Disease
Birth	Hepatitis B
2 months	Diphtheria, tetanus & pertussis; Polio; Hib; Hepatitis B, Pneumococcal
4 months	Diphtheria, tetanus & pertussis; Polio; Hib; Hepatitis B, Pneumococcal
6 months	Diphtheria, tetanus & pertussis; Polio; Hepatitis B, Pneumococcal
12 months	Measles, mumps & rubella; Hib; Meningococcal c
18 months	Chickenpox (Varicella)
Prior to school entry 4-5 years	Diphtheria, tetanus & pertussis; Poliomyelitis, MMR

Medication

Educators can only administer medication prescribed by a doctor. They cannot administer non-prescription drugs or dietary supplements unless the service is provided with written authorisation by a doctor. Medication can only be administered to a child by Educators from its original packaging. (Complete with pharmacy instruction sticker).

On arrival at the Service families must give medication to Educators for safe storage and complete a medication authorisation form. Under no circumstances should medication be left in children's bags.

Allergies or Asthma

Please submit any allergies or asthma on the Enrolment Form and also bring it to the notice of our Director on enrolment or as it is diagnosed by your Doctor. The Service has a procedure the staff follow to minimise allergic reactions.

The Service requires an Action Plan filled in by your Doctor to assist in managing your child's needs. The Action Plan is to be updated every 6 months or when required.

Food the Service will provide

It is expected your child will consume 50% of the RDI at the Service.

Suggested sample servings for children aged 4 –7 years

Food group	Serves per day	
Bread and cereals, rice, pasta and noodles	3- 4	1 serve 2 slice of bread OR 1 medium bread roll OR 1 1/3 cup ready to eat cereal OR 1 cup cooked porridge OR 1 cup cooked rice, pasta or noodles
Fruit	2	1 medium piece of fruit OR 2 small pieces of fruit OR 1 cup diced fruit OR 1/2 cup fruit juice 1 glass of fruit juice per day is enough. Fresh fruit is best but frozen, canned and dried are also good alternatives
Vegetables, legumes	4	1/2 cup cooked vegetables OR 1 cup salad vegetables OR 1 small potato 1/2 cup legumes
Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts and legumes	1 1/2- 1	65-100g cooked meat or chicken (2 small chops, 1/2 cup mince, 2 slices roast meat) OR 80-120g cooked fish OR 1/2 cup legumes OR 40-60g cooked fish OR 2 eggs OR 1/3 cup nuts. For safety reasons never give nuts to children under 5 years of age – always use paste
Dairy Milk, yoghurt, cheese	3	250ml (1 cup) milk OR 250ml (1 cup) custard OR 200g tub yoghurt OR 40g cheese

Reference: A HEALTHY START IN LIFE PRESCHOOL NUTRITION Queensland Health 2007. For more information on healthy eating go to www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

This service supports breastfeeding. Families that are breastfeeding should speak to one of our Nursery staff to be aware of our policies on storing and serving breast milk. Families that are formula feeding should also consult our Nursery Staff to be aware on how we need the formula prepared